

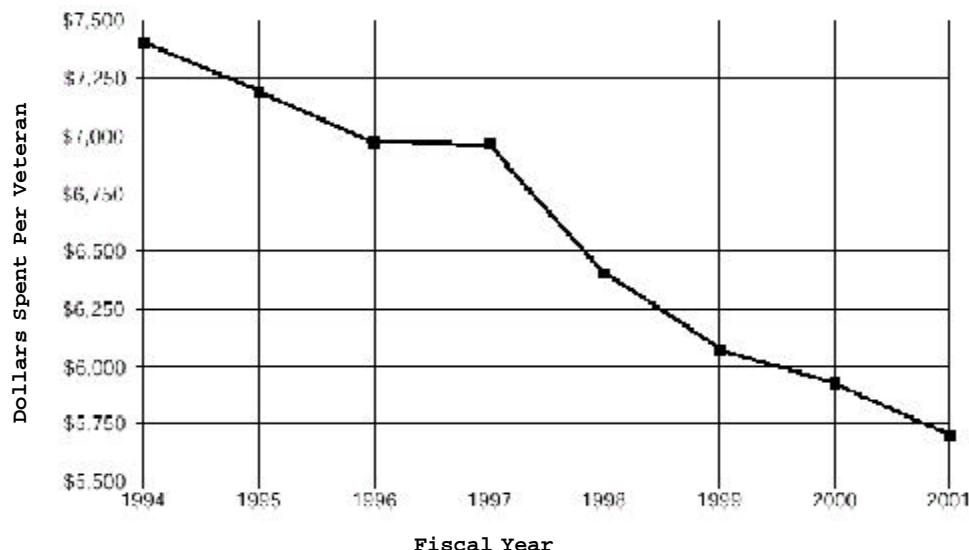


A Legislative Update by:
CONGRESSMAN
CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ
Proudly Serving the 28th Congressional District of Texas

VETERANS UPDATE

The Administration recently outlined its proposed VA budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Unfortunately, clever accounting gives the illusion that an additional \$3.1 billion has been dedicated to enhancing veterans services. In reality, veterans won't see most of this amount because of budget maneuvering. For example, \$1.8 billion is absorbed by personnel costs shifted from another account. Worse yet, some of the money credited to the veterans account does not even exist but reflects "savings" the VA must find--cuts--and also reflects "cost-sharing"--more fees imposed on veterans themselves. In the end, the budget only provides a \$1.28 billion increase in total discretionary spending and most of that will be eaten up by unavoidable cost increases like higher pharmaceutical prices and inflation.

VA MEDICAL DOLLARS PER PATIENT



This graph illustrates the increasing decline in resources for VA medical care.

San Diego, TX Office
Duval County Courthouse, 2nd Fl.
(361) 279-3907
(361) 279-8117 (Fax)

San Antonio, TX Office
1313 SE Military Drive, St 1115
(210) 924-7383
(210) 927-6222 (Fax)

Roma, TX Office
301 Lincoln Street
(956) 847-1111
(956) 849-3871 (Fax)

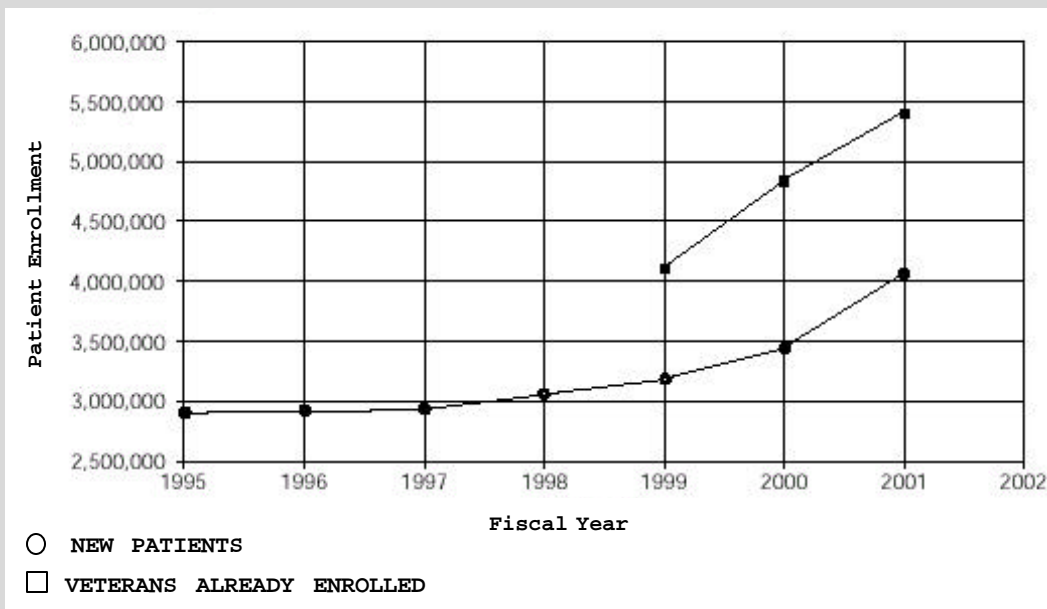
In Washington DC 323 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-1640
(202) 225-1641 (Fax)

www.house.gov/rodriguez

This is what the Administration doesn't tell you:

- X \$794 million in “additional funding” is needed to meet personnel costs.
- X \$616 million in “management savings and efficiencies” the VA must find. In other words, VA must CUT services to create this revenue.
- X \$400 million from higher prescription co-pays by veterans themselves. There was already a recent increase in Rx co-pays from \$2 to \$7.
- X \$1.15 billion depends on Congress passing a Bush proposal to impose a new \$1,500 annual copayment on higher income non-service connected veterans (i.e. Priority 7 veterans) who receive medical care from VA.

NEW VETERAN PATIENTS AND ENROLLED VETERAN PATIENTS



This graph shows that more veterans are seeking care at VA medical facilities. As the veterans' population gets older, the need for health services will significantly increase. Yet the Administration has failed to provide the additional resources needed to meet the demand and provide quality care.